THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) New Divisions are set up keeping in view the factors like size, workload, accessibility, traffic patterns and other operating/administrative requirements etc. consistent with the needs of economy and efficiency. The proposal for creation of a new railway division at Salem or Coimbatore when seen in the light of these considerations, is not found operationally feasible.

Demolition of French Aircraft Carrier

300. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that decommissioned and rusty French Aircraft Carrier Clemenceau with possible hazardous substances on board is coming to Indian shores for demolition after the removal of asbestos from the ship;

(b) if so, whether necessary and adequate precautions have been taken so that its demolition would not be an environmental hazard, endangering sea life and contaminating atmosphere; and

(c) the compelling circumstances which contributed to our decision for allowing Indian shores for its demolition?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Necessary and adequate precautions for safeguarding the environment as a whole, is enforced by all statutory rules and regulations of Gujarat Maritime Board, Gujarat Pollution Control Board (GPCD), local Customs authorities etc. The buyer of the French Aircraft Carrier 'Cleamnceau' will have to follow rules and procedures established by law for its demolition.

(c) Presently there is no restriction on import of ships for demolition. The present deal is purely a commercial venture between the buyer and the seller.